

# Florida State Parks Foundation Receives Major Matching Grant From Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's Outdoor Fund

*A gift that will continue to grow and flourish for many years to come*

TALLAHASSEE, FL, UNITED STATES, September 22, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Florida State Parks Foundation has received a \$50,000 grant from Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's Outdoor Fund for its Plant a Pine initiative.

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Working together, we all can help ensure a bright future for Florida's treasured natural resources.”

*Bob Ziehmer, President of the Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's Outdoor Fund*

“This very generous gift is even more special because it will be used as a matching grant which effectively doubles its worth,” Foundation President Gil Ziffer said.

The Foundation announced in April a goal of planting 100,000 longleaf pine trees by Earth Day 2021 (April 22). “Now thanks to this wonderful matching grant from Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's Outdoor Fund we will sail past

that,” he said.

“Our Plant a Pine initiative has really resonated with the public,” he said. “And now, thanks to this \$50,000 matching grant, we will be able to do so much more.”

“For every \$1 donated, the Foundation will plant one longleaf pine seedling in a Florida State Park, and Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's Outdoor Fund will match that donation up to \$50,000. People can even dedicate a tree to a loved one. It is a gift that will continue to grow and flourish for many years to come,” he said.

The campaign launched on Earth Day 2020 and has already raised enough to be able to plant more than 25,000 longleaf pine seedlings in state parks across Florida. The majority of the first round of seedlings are being planted at Torreya State Park, which was devastated by Hurricane Michael in 2018.

“Florida State Parks provides important recreational access for the public to enjoy the outdoors,” said Bob Ziehmer, President of the Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's Outdoor Fund. “In addition, state parks also help showcase and conserve an amazing diversity of habitats and natural

resources. The Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's Outdoor Fund is proud to partner with the Florida State Parks Foundation on this tree-planting initiative. Working together, we all can help ensure a bright future for Florida's treasured natural resources."

The longleaf pine is native to the Southeast and once flourished over a range of 90 million acres. Sadly it is now endangered, covering less than 3 percent of its original range. It has long been prized for commercial use in building houses, ships, and railroads, and its resin used for making turpentine.

Mature longleaf ecosystems support more than 30 endangered and threatened species, including red-cockaded woodpeckers, gopher tortoises, and indigo snakes. Regular burning to restore natural rhythms enables longleaf pine to become rich, stable ecosystems. Longleaf pines are fire-adapted and dependent on burning, which stabilizes and enriches the soil.

"The trees are being planted in coordination with the Florida Park Service in park areas identified for restoration efforts," said Ziffer.

Groups interested in supporting hands-on tree planting projects can contact the Foundation through its website [www.floridastateparksfoundation.org/trees](http://www.floridastateparksfoundation.org/trees).

The Foundation, founded in 1993 as Friends of Florida State Parks and renamed in 2018, is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation whose mission is to support and help sustain the Florida Park Service, its 175 award-winning parks and trails, local Friends groups and more than 20,000 park volunteers.

It does this through programs that preserve and protect state parks, educate visitors about the value of state parks, encourage community engagement and active use of state parks, and advocacy.

The volunteer Board of Directors represents private and public sectors as well as local and statewide interests.

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